

the information destroyed or not preserved would have been unfavorable to the contractor: *Provided*, That this presumption shall not apply where the contractor shows that the destruction or failure to preserve records results from circumstances that are outside of the contractor's control.

(c) The requirements of this section shall apply only to records made or kept on or after the date that the Office of Management and Budget has cleared the requirements.

§ 60-250.81 Access to records.

Each contractor shall permit access during normal business hours to its places of business for the purpose of conducting on-site compliance evaluations and complaint investigations and inspecting and copying such books and accounts and records, including computerized records, and other material as may be relevant to the matter under investigation and pertinent to compliance with the Act or this part. Information obtained in this manner shall be used only in connection with the administration of the Act and in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

§ 60-250.82 Labor organizations and recruiting and training agencies.

(a) Whenever performance in accordance with the equal opportunity clause or any matter contained in the regulations in this part may necessitate a revision of a collective bargaining agreement, the labor organizations which are parties to such agreement shall be given an adequate opportunity to present their views to OFCCP.

(b) OFCCP shall use its best efforts, directly or through contractors, subcontractors, local officials, the Department of Veterans Affairs, vocational rehabilitation facilities, and all other available instrumentalities, to cause any labor organization, recruiting and training agency or other representative of workers who are employed by a contractor to cooperate with, and to assist in, the implementation of the purposes of the Act.

§ 60-250.83 Rulings and interpretations.

Rulings under or interpretations of the Act and this part shall be made by the Deputy Assistant Secretary.

§ 60-250.84 Responsibilities of local employment service offices.

(a) Local employment service offices shall refer qualified special disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era to fill employment openings listed by contractors with such local offices pursuant to the mandatory listing requirements of the equal opportunity clause, and shall give priority to special disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era in making such referrals.

(b) Local employment service offices shall contact employers to solicit the job orders described in paragraph (a) of this section. The state employment security agency shall provide OFCCP upon request information pertinent to whether the contractor is in compliance with the mandatory listing requirements of the equal opportunity clause.

§ 60-250.85 Effective date.

This part is effective on January 4, 1999, and does not apply retroactively. Contractors presently holding Government contracts shall update their affirmative action programs as required to comply with the regulations in this part within 120 days after January 4, 1999.

APPENDIX A TO PART 60-250—GUIDELINES ON A CONTRACTOR'S DUTY TO PROVIDE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

The guidelines in this appendix are in large part derived from, and are consistent with, the discussion regarding the duty to provide reasonable accommodation contained in the Interpretive Guidance on Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) set out as an appendix to the regulations issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) implementing the ADA (29 CFR part 1630). Although the following discussion is intended to provide an independent "free-standing" source of guidance with respect to the duty to provide reasonable accommodation under this part, to the

extent that the EEOC appendix provides additional guidance which is consistent with the following discussion, it may be relied upon for purposes of this part as well. See §60-250.1(c). Contractors are obligated to provide reasonable accommodation and to take affirmative action. Reasonable accommodation under VEVRAA, like reasonable accommodation required under Section 503 and the ADA, is a part of the nondiscrimination obligation. See EEOC appendix cited in this paragraph. Affirmative action is unique to VEVRAA and Section 503, and includes actions above and beyond those required as a matter of nondiscrimination. An example of this is the requirement discussed in paragraph 2 of this appendix that a contractor *shall* make an inquiry of a special disabled veteran who is having significant difficulty performing his or her job.

1. A contractor is required to make reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of an "otherwise qualified" special disabled veteran, unless the contractor can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its business. As stated in §60-250.2(o), a special disabled veteran is qualified if he or she satisfies all the skill, experience, education and other job-related selection criteria, and can perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. A contractor is required to make a reasonable accommodation with respect to its application process if the special disabled veteran is qualified with respect to that process. One is "otherwise qualified" if he or she is qualified for a job, except that, because of a disability, he or she needs a reasonable accommodation to be able to perform the job's essential functions.

2. Although the contractor would not be expected to accommodate disabilities of which it is unaware, the contractor has an affirmative obligation to provide a reasonable accommodation for applicants and employees who are known to be special disabled veterans. As stated in §60-250.42 (see also Appendix B of this part), the contractor is required to invite applicants who have been provided an offer of employment, before they are placed on the contractor's payroll, to indicate whether they are covered by the Act and wish to benefit under the contractor's affirmative action program. That section further provides that the contractor should seek the advice of special disabled veterans who "self-identify" in this way as to proper placement and appropriate accommodation. Moreover, §60-250.44(d) provides that if an employee who is a known special disabled veteran is having significant difficulty performing his or her job and it is reasonable to conclude that the performance problem may be related to the disability, the contractor is required to confidentially inquire whether the problem is disability related and if the

employee is in need of a reasonable accommodation.

3. An accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables a special disabled veteran to enjoy equal employment opportunities. Equal employment opportunity means an opportunity to attain the same level of performance, or to enjoy the same level of benefits and privileges of employment, as are available to the average similarly situated employee without a disability. Thus, for example, an accommodation made to assist an employee who is a special disabled veteran in the performance of his or her job must be adequate to enable the individual to perform the essential functions of the position. The accommodation, however, does not have to be the "best" accommodation possible, so long as it is sufficient to meet the job-related needs of the individual being accommodated. There are three areas in which reasonable accommodations may be necessary: (1) accommodations in the application process; (2) accommodations that enable employees who are special disabled veterans to perform the essential functions of the position held or desired; and (3) accommodations that enable employees who are special disabled veterans to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by employees without disabilities.

4. The term "undue hardship" refers to any accommodation that would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial, or disruptive, or that would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the contractor's business. The contractor's claim that the cost of a particular accommodation will impose an undue hardship requires a determination of which financial resources should be considered—those of the contractor in its entirety or only those of the facility that will be required to provide the accommodation. This inquiry requires an analysis of the financial relationship between the contractor and the facility in order to determine what resources will be available to the facility in providing the accommodation. If the contractor can show that the cost of the accommodation would impose an undue hardship, it would still be required to provide the accommodation if the funding is available from another source, e.g., the Department of Veterans Affairs or a state vocational rehabilitation agency, or if Federal, state or local tax deductions or tax credits are available to offset the cost of the accommodation. In the absence of such funding, the special disabled veteran should be given the option of providing the accommodation or of paying that portion of the cost which constitutes the undue hardship on the operation of the business.

5. Section 60-250.2(r) lists a number of examples of the most common types of accommodations that the contractor may be required to provide. There are any number of specific accommodations that may be appropriate for particular situations. The discussion in this appendix is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of required accommodations (as no such list would be feasible); rather, it is intended to provide general guidance regarding the nature of the obligation. The decision as to whether a reasonable accommodation is appropriate must be made on a case-by-case basis. The contractor generally should consult with the special disabled veteran in deciding on the appropriate accommodation; frequently, the individual will know exactly what accommodation he or she will need to perform successfully in a particular job, and may suggest an accommodation which is simpler and less expensive than the accommodation the contractor might have devised. Other resources to consult include the appropriate state vocational rehabilitation services agency, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1-800-669-EEOC (voice), 1-800-800-3302 (TDD)), the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) operated by the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (1-800-JAN-7234), private disability organizations (including those that serve veterans), and other employers.

6. With respect to accommodations that can permit an employee who is a special disabled veteran to perform essential functions successfully, a reasonable accommodation may require the contractor to, for instance, modify or acquire equipment. For the visually-impaired such accommodations may include providing adaptive hardware and software for computers, electronic visual aids, braille devices, talking calculators, magnifiers, audio recordings and braille or large-print materials. For persons with hearing impairments, reasonable accommodations may include providing telephone handset amplifiers, telephones compatible with hearing aids and telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDDs). For persons with limited physical dexterity, the obligation may require the provision of goose neck telephone headsets, mechanical page turners and raised or lowered furniture.

7. Other reasonable accommodations of this type may include providing personal assistants such as a reader, interpreter or travel attendant, permitting the use of accrued paid leave or providing additional unpaid leave for necessary treatment. The contractor may also be required to make existing facilities readily accessible to and usable by special disabled veterans—including areas used by employees for purposes other than the performance of essential job functions such as restrooms, break rooms, cafeterias, lounges, auditoriums, libraries, parking lots

and credit unions. This type of accommodation will enable employees to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by employees who do not have disabilities.

8. Another of the potential accommodations listed in §60-250.2(r) is job restructuring. This may involve reallocating or redistributing those nonessential, marginal job functions which a qualified special disabled veteran cannot perform to another position. Accordingly, if a clerical employee who is a special disabled veteran is occasionally required to lift heavy boxes containing files, but cannot do so because of a disability, this task may be reassigned to another employee. The contractor, however, is not required to reallocate essential functions, i.e., those functions that the individual who holds the job would have to perform, with or without reasonable accommodation, in order to be considered qualified for the position. For instance, the contractor which has a security guard position which requires the incumbent to inspect identity cards would not have to provide a blind special disabled veteran with an assistant to perform that duty; in such a case, the assistant would be performing an essential function of the job for the special disabled veteran. Job restructuring may also involve allowing part-time or modified work schedules. For instance, flexible or adjusted work schedules could benefit special disabled veterans who cannot work a standard schedule because of the need to obtain medical treatment, or special disabled veterans with mobility impairments who depend on a public transportation system that is not accessible during the hours of a standard schedule.

9. Reasonable accommodation may also include reassignment to a vacant position. In general, reassignment should be considered only when accommodation within the special disabled veteran's current position would pose an undue hardship. Reassignment is not required for applicants. However, in making hiring decisions, contractors are encouraged to consider applicants who are known special disabled veterans for all available positions for which they may be qualified when the position(s) applied for is unavailable. Reassignment may not be used to limit, segregate, or otherwise discriminate against employees who are special disabled veterans by forcing reassignments to undesirable positions or to designated offices or facilities. Employers should reassign the individual to an equivalent position in terms of pay, status, etc., if the individual is qualified, and if the position is vacant within a reasonable amount of time. A "reasonable amount of time" should be determined in light of the totality of the circumstances.

10. The contractor may reassign an individual to a lower graded position if there are no accommodations that would enable the

employee to remain in the current position and there are no vacant equivalent positions for which the individual is qualified with or without reasonable accommodation. The contractor may maintain the reassigned special disabled veteran at the salary of the higher graded position, and must do so if it maintains the salary of reassigned employees who are not special disabled veterans. It should also be noted that the contractor is not required to promote a special disabled veteran as an accommodation.

11. With respect to the application process, appropriate accommodations may include the following: (1) Providing information regarding job vacancies in a form accessible to special disabled veterans who are vision or hearing impaired, e.g., by making an announcement available in braille, in large print, or on audio tape, or by responding to job inquiries via TDDs; (2) providing readers, interpreters and other similar assistance during the application, testing and interview process; (3) appropriately adjusting or modifying employment-related examinations, e.g., extending regular time deadlines, allowing a special disabled veteran who is blind or has a learning disorder such as dyslexia to provide oral answers for a written test, and permitting an applicant, regardless of the nature of his or her ability, to demonstrate skills through alternative techniques and utilization of adapted tools, aids and devices; and (4) ensuring a special disabled veteran with a mobility impairment full access to testing locations such that the applicant's test scores accurately reflect the applicant's skills or aptitude rather than the applicant's mobility impairment.

APPENDIX B TO PART 60-250—SAMPLE INVITATION TO SELF-IDENTIFY

NOTE: When the invitation to self-identify is being extended to special disabled veterans prior to an offer of employment, as is permitted in limited circumstances under §§60-250.42(a)(1) and (2), paragraph 7(ii) of this appendix, relating to identification of reasonable accommodations, should be omitted. This will avoid a conflict with the EEOC's ADA Guidance, which in most cases precludes asking a job applicant (prior to a job offer being made) about potential reasonable accommodations.

[Sample Invitation to Self-Identify]

1. This employer is a Government contractor subject to the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended, which requires Government contractors to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified special disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era.

2. [THE FOLLOWING TEXT SHOULD BE USED WHEN EXTENDING AN INVITATION TO VETERANS

OF THE VIETNAM ERA ONLY.] If you are a veteran of the Vietnam era, we would like to include you under our affirmative action program. If you would like to be included under the affirmative action program, please tell us. The term "veteran of the Vietnam era" refers to a person who served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days, and was discharged or released therefrom with other than a dishonorable discharge, if any part of such active duty occurred in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975 or between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975, in all other cases. The term also refers to a person who was discharged or released from active duty for a service-connected disability if any part of such active duty was performed in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975, or between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975, in all other cases.

[THE FOLLOWING TEXT SHOULD BE USED WHEN EXTENDING AN INVITATION TO SPECIAL DISABLED VETERANS ONLY.] If you are a special disabled veteran, we would like to include you in our affirmative action program. If you would like to be included under the affirmative action program, please tell us. This information will assist us in placing you in an appropriate position and in making accommodations for your disability. The term "special disabled veteran" refers to a veteran who is entitled to compensation (or who, but for the receipt of military retired pay, would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs for a disability rated at 30 percent or more, or rated at 10 or 20 percent in the case of a veteran who has been determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs to have a serious employment handicap. The term also refers to a person who was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

[THE FOLLOWING TEXT SHOULD BE USED WHEN EXTENDING AN INVITATION TO BOTH VETERANS OF THE VIETNAM ERA AND SPECIAL DISABLED VETERANS.] If you are a veteran of the Vietnam era or a special disabled veteran, we would like to include you under our affirmative action program. If you would like to be included under the affirmative action program, please tell us. [The contractor should include here the definitions of "veteran of the Vietnam era" and "special disabled veteran" found in the two preceding paragraphs.]

3. You may inform us of your desire to benefit under the program at this time and/or at any time in the future.

4. Submission of this information is voluntary and refusal to provide it will not subject you to any adverse treatment. The information provided will be used only in ways that are not inconsistent with the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended.

5. The information you submit will be kept confidential, except that (i) supervisors and managers may be informed regarding restrictions on the work or duties of special disabled veterans; and regarding necessary accommodations; (ii) first aid and safety personnel may be informed, when and to the extent appropriate, if you have a condition that might require emergency treatment; and (iii) Government officials engaged in enforcing laws administered by OFCCP, or enforcing the Americans with Disabilities Act, may be informed.

6. [The contractor should here insert a brief provision summarizing the relevant portion of its affirmative action program.]

7. [THE FOLLOWING TEXT SHOULD BE USED ONLY WHEN EXTENDING AN INVITATION TO SPECIAL DISABLED VETERANS, EITHER BY THEMSELVES OR IN COMBINATION WITH VETERANS OF THE VIETNAM ERA. PARAGRAPH 7(II) SHOULD BE OMITTED WHEN THE INVITATION TO SELF-IDENTIFY IS BEING EXTENDED PRIOR TO AN OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT.] If you are a special disabled veteran it would assist us if you tell us about (i) any special methods, skills, and procedures which qualify you for positions that you might not otherwise be able to do because of your disability so that you will be considered for any positions of that kind, and (ii) the accommodations which we could make which would enable you to perform the job properly and safely, including special equipment, changes in the physical layout of the job, elimination of certain duties relating to the job, provision of personal assistance services or other accommodations. This information will assist us in placing you in an appropriate position and in making accommodations for your disability.

APPENDIX C TO PART 60-250—REVIEW OF PERSONNEL PROCESSES

The following is a set of procedures which contractors may use to meet the requirements of § 60-250.44(b):

1. The application or personnel form of each known applicant who is a special disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era should be annotated to identify each vacancy for which the applicant was considered, and the form should be quickly retrievable for review by the Department of Labor and the contractor's personnel officials for use in investigations and internal compliance activities.

2. The personnel or application records of each known special disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era should include (i) the identification of each promotion for which the covered veteran was considered, and (ii) the identification of each training program for which the covered veteran was considered.

3. In each case where an employee or applicant who is a special disabled veteran or a

veteran of the Vietnam era is rejected for employment, promotion, or training, the contractor should prepare a statement of the reason as well as a description of the accommodations considered (for a rejected special disabled veteran). The statement of the reason for rejection (if the reason is medically related), and the description of the accommodations considered, should be treated as confidential medical records in accordance with § 60-250.23(d). These materials should be available to the applicant or employee concerned upon request.

4. Where applicants or employees are selected for hire, promotion, or training and the contractor undertakes any accommodation which makes it possible for him or her to place a special disabled veteran on the job, the contractor should make a record containing a description of the accommodation. The record should be treated as a confidential medical record in accordance with § 60-250.23(d).

PART 60-741—AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND NONDISCRIMINATION OBLIGATIONS OF CONTRACTORS AND SUBCONTRACTORS REGARDING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

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